

USDA/Rural Development

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USDA CELEBRATES EARTH DAY WITH OVER \$100 MILLION IN COMMUNITY WATER/WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE LOANS AND GRANTS

KULM, April 22, 2003. . . . In recognition of the 33rd Anniversary of Earth Day, Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman announced the selection of 42 rural water and wastewater community infrastructure projects in 29 states to receive investment funding totaling over \$104 million. The fund assists rural communities address health and environmental issues and promotes business development.

President Bush has proclaimed 2002-2003 as the “Year of Clean Water.” The President’s proclamation recognizes the importance of the 30th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act and called upon all Americans to serve by setting good examples of environmental stewardship in our daily lives.

“We are pleased to be in Kulm to help celebrate the 33rd Anniversary of Earth Day,” said Clare Carlson, USDA Rural Development State Director. “The City of Kulm was selected as North Dakota’s Earth Day project which highlights this year’s Earth Day theme, “Action for a Healthy Environment” which encourages Americans to heed President Bush’s call to be good stewards of the land and life around.”

During Earth Day ceremonies, USDA Rural Development State Director Clare Carlson presented a symbolic check representing a Rural Development Rural Utilities Service (RUS) loan and grant package for \$2,030,000 (\$946,200 loan/\$1,083,800 grant) to the City of Kulm.

The funding package is to complete phases one and two of a three-phase project. In Fiscal Year 2002, a \$690,000 RUS loan and \$380,000 RUS grant, along with a loan through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) completed the replacement of sewer mains for phase one. The second and current phase began in Fiscal Year 2003, with a \$256,200 RUS loan and \$703,800 RUS grant along with a CDBG grant and a CWSRF loan.

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This phase will replace 16,865 feet of deteriorated public wastewater disposal lines and 955 feet of relining. The third and final phase calls for the completion of the wastewater disposal lines in Fiscal Year 2004 with an estimated cost of \$1,350,000.

"Funding for this project will help build and improve the badly needed infrastructure that is crucial to both the health and economic development of the community," continued Carlson. "By providing such basic benefits to the community, we are fulfilling the Bush Administration's pledge to build rural infrastructure, which brings jobs to the region and improves the quality of life. The award of this funding package is evidence of the good that can be achieved when local, state and federal governments work together to meet the needs of our people."

In Fiscal Year 2002, USDA Rural Development provided over **\$76.7 million dollars** in loan and grant financing to North Dakota citizens.

USDA Rural Development is the lead federal entity for rural economic and community development needs. It administers financial and technical assistance through a network of state Rural Development offices, various non-profit and educational institutional partners, and its national office.

Further information on these and other rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/>.

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